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SEVENTH ISSUE
FEBRUARY 2024



SAVE THE DATE

February 2024
MCHS & MCDS Announced

March 1, 2024
Professional Award
Nomination Forms Due

Exemplary Program
Application Due

All Student Contests Due

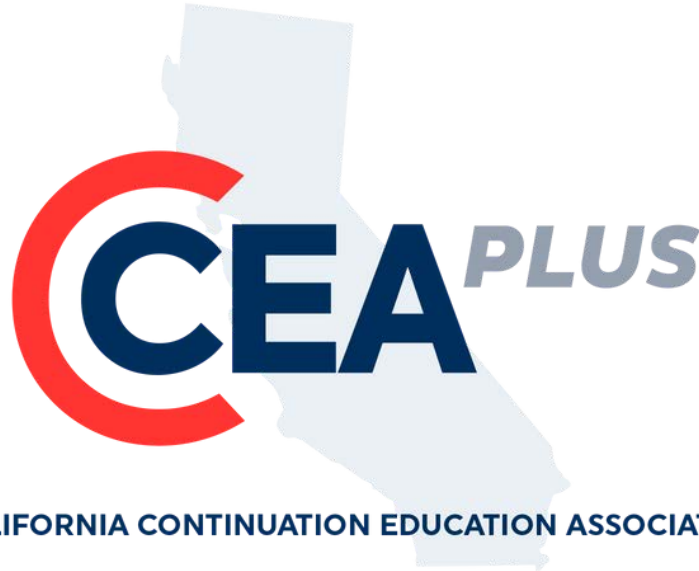
April 25, 2024
2024 Conference Model
School Visit Trip

April 25 - 28, 2024
CCEA Plus Annual
Conference in Burbank, CA

April 27, 2024
Model School Awards
Ceremony

THE SPOTLIGHT

A Monthly Newsletter From CCEA Plus
WWW.CCEANET.ORG



CALIFORNIA CONTINUATION EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

To Our Alt. Ed. Community,

Encouraging and confirming news from Stanford University's Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities. We know educators in Alternative Ed. are second to none in their ability to connect and breathe hope into the students they serve. Alternative school sites are excellent in their approach to meet kids where they're at academically, emotionally and socially. Below are just a few of the findings from the recent study that proves what we do WORKS:

- Positive transition rates are high and steady for students enrolled in DASS schools for at least 45 days.
- About 66% of students who exit DASS schools after more than 45 days of enrollment transfer back to traditional high schools or to other completion certificate-granting institutions.
- Less than 1 in 5 DASS students drop or age out of high school without a diploma or certificate of completion in a given school year.

On behalf of the CCEA Plus Board, thank you for your commitment and hard work to those you serve. Alternative Ed. sites are unique in their approach, techniques, structures and needs. For this reason, CCEA Plus is focused on bringing high quality presenters to share best practices in the areas most impactful to Alternative Ed. schools. We look forward to supporting each educator through our annual conference this April in Burbank, CA. It's through engaging, networking and sharing with each other that we will continue to experience positive, unequivocal results.

[Stanford University Article](#)

Sincerely,
CCEA Plus Board

THIS MONTH'S SPOTLIGHT IS ON...



Travis Education Center

WINNING WITH CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Travis Education Center made a concerted effort to become a trauma informed school. They accomplished this by focusing on character development that works alongside the PBIS and trauma informed practices already in place at the school.

Travis' grassroots efforts began in 2016 with professional development based on research from Angela Duckworth's GRIT and Carol Dwek's Mindset. The goal of staff training was to bring awareness to how these concepts could impact student learning. Emphasis was placed on creating a safe environment and improved school culture with the space to learn.

Embedded within Travis Education Center's efforts is character development in order to help students gain personal and social skills, as well as soft skills for employment readiness. With just a little less emphasis on academics and curriculum and more on character and wellness, Travis enables their students to become productive learners.

At Travis Education Center, building relationships is first and foremost. The desired outcome is to integrate PBIS ideas into that philosophy. PBIS should be encouraging, while teaching expectations. Staff recognizes that behavior is a way of communication. Students exhibiting challenging behaviors have needs and solutions should be based on those needs. While some need space, others may just need a pause.

Travis Education Center ensures the longevity and effectiveness of these efforts by perception surveys of students, parents and staff. Results of the surveys have had an impressive effect on key school data points, is reflected in the SPSA and facilitates school based decisions.



NEXT STEPS

Travis Education Center has identified an area of growth for the near future: Career readiness and College/Career exploration. The school acknowledges that current career technical opportunities are limited due to small school size and qualified personnel. Staff is thinking outside the box to increase opportunities for its students.

Travis has developed a job shadowing program through a partnership with its district employees. Students are placed at the district offices to shadow careers quarterly. Travis has also developed a Careers in Education class which includes fieldwork at local elementary schools. Their long term goal is to define their career pathways with district and site resources.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Location: Fairfield, CA

District: Travis Unified School District

District Pop: 5, 284

Feeder Schools: 1

School Pop: 70

Certificated Staff: 6

Total Staff: 13

Model School Since: 2017

TIP OF THE MONTH

Behavior is a way of communicating an unmet need. Let's be more curious about what is going on with a student and see how we can support them. Let's make decisions that benefit all students. Students "set the temperature" and staff "is the thermostat". Sometimes, students come in cold, and need to be warmed up. Staff efforts should ensure that the learning environment is warm, inviting and comfortable.

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Our journey is not without its difficulties, but it is essential to celebrate the small milestones. In doing so, we acknowledge the hard work, dedication, and progress our students make every day. These milestones may be stepping stones, but they mark significant achievements on the path to a brighter future.

The core of our mission is to create an environment that is safe, inclusive, and caring. It goes beyond academics and college or career readiness - it extends to nurturing the human within each student, making them socially and emotionally aware. Our commitment to their holistic development is what sets us apart and makes our community truly special.

Our educational community is not just a place of learning; it is a sanctuary of growth, support, and endless possibilities. Thank you for your faithful commitment to our students and your shared vision. Together, we are making a difference, and our students can envision a future where success knows no limits.

Janelle Preston, Principal

RECENT NEWS & RESOURCES

Articles, Videos & Presentations

[CA lags behind other states in bilingual education for ELs](#)

[Implementing PBIS in High Schools](#)

[Integrating Academic, Social, Emotional, Behavioral, and Mental Health Supports for Student Need](#)

[Scaling California's School-Based Mental and Behavioral Health Infrastructures](#)

[The Science of Reading: The Importance of Comprehension](#)

USEFUL LINKS

[Student Recognition Awards Page](#)

[Professional Award Nominations Page](#)

[Exemplary Program Application](#)

[2024 Conference Model School Visit Sign-Up](#)

[2023 Model School Awards Gala Photos](#)

OPPORTUNITIES

[Regional Representative Application](#)

[Volunteer at the 2024 Conference](#)

[Sign Up to be a Model School Reader](#)

[Sing Up to be a contributor for The Spotlight newsletter](#)

["The Spotlight" feedback form](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA



SPOTLIGHTING EXEMPLARY PROGRAMS



2020 Exemplary Award Winner: Abraxas Garden

In 2015, Abraxas High School (AHS) created a school garden by transforming a tennis court into an outdoor lab. The garden project was built entirely by students in the Abraxas Construction, Agriculture and Aquaponics Classes. The garden was created to teach students about growing healthy food and giving back to the community. AHS started with traditional garden beds, then added aquaponics beds powered by an 8,000-gallon aquaponics pond filled with over 300 tilapia fish. Also, AHS has 25 fruit trees that are productive throughout the year. Abraxas High School has donated over 12,000 pounds of produce to needy families in their community.

Success is measured not only by production, but through student interaction. Students arrive to AHS with heavy personal issues, and they all love the escape of working in the garden. Student confidence soars when they lead tours to anyone who enters the garden and explain the seed-to-table of aquaponics and traditional farming methods.

The AHS garden is used as a learning hub for many other classes, including Construction, Leadership, Art, Economics, English and their Transition students. The bulk of the work is done every day in the garden by the Agriculture and Aquaponics classes.

The garden requires a budget of about \$12,000 yearly to maintain the high level of production. The money to keep the garden project running comes from fundraisers, donations and grants.

In addition to student success, the Abraxas Garden has been nationally recognized. The National Garden Club awarded the Abraxas HS Garden with the distinction as the Top High School Garden in 2017 and 2018. In 2021, Bob Lutticken, Biology and Aquaponics teacher who runs the garden, was voted as Top Teacher Finalist by Live With Kelly and Ryan and Horticulturist of the Year in 2023 by the San Diego Horticultural Society. The garden has also been recognized by numerous news and TV outlets such as the Poway Chieftain and KUSI. We look forward to many more years of successful harvests and satisfied students.

